

He laughed, and brushed us with his wing, and  
    vanished,  
And left us stricken there.

And we whom Youth had once made strong to  
    run  
    Now creep in weariness,  
And through our days a thread of pain is spun  
    To bind our helplessness;  
Heartsick we face the drab grey years, scarce  
    daring,  
    To seek amid the aloes and the rue  
The balm of one fond love, in pity caring  
    To heal our faith anew . . . . .

*For these are they*  
*Who having known the glory of the dawn,*  
*And watched the sunrise broaden into day,*  
*Now stumble onward through a twilight cold*  
*Ere yet the sun has sipped the dregs of dew;*  
*And we who still walk upright in the light*  
*Because the groping shadow passed us by,*  
*Go humbly on our way with bended heads,*  
*In helpless shame before their suffering.*  
*Shoulder to shoulder we have risked with them*  
*The thing we dreaded more than death itself,*  
*And since unreckoning Fate has left us whole,*  
*And laid on them the burden and the tears*  
*Here do we take our solemn stand, and swear,*  
*By all the aching debt we owe to them,*  
*Ungrudging and unfalteringly to give*